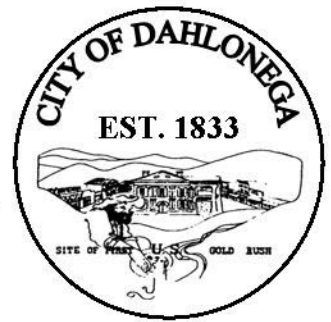


# City Limits

News from the Government Offices of Dahlonega, Georgia

Vol.5, No. 1

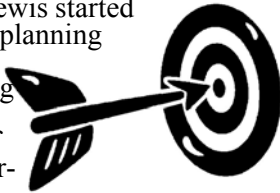
February 2009



This newsletter is a collaborative project of the city of Dahlonega and Lumpkin County, designed to help citizens stay informed. Editor: Lee Ann Roy, Independent Writer

## City IDs Short and Longer Term Goals

Dahlonega Mayor Gary McCullough, members of the city council and city manager Bill Lewis started out 2009 with a planning retreat in January, bringing back an ambitious list of short and longer-term goals.



Here's a list of priorities the city plans to focus on this year over and above the day-to-day business at City Hall.

- Re-evaluate the 2009 operating budget to ensure revenues will meet expenses and take appropriate action if necessary.
- Evaluate the feasibility of allowing developers to pre-purchase water and sewer tap fees for proposed future developments.
- Update and expand the city's purchasing and personnel policies.
- Adopt a comprehensive financial policy. (Check this one off; council approved the policy at its February meeting.)
- Develop an ordinance to prohibit large trucks on the square and in the Central Business District. (City could not do this before on the roads that previously were owned by the state.)
- Develop a wish list for a new City Hall.
- Prepare a master plan for expansion and repairs to city sidewalks.

And over the next 1-3 years:

- Complete a program of design and funding for a new City Hall on the old Lumpkin County kindergarten site just north of the Public Square.
- Explore automation options and recommend strategies for such activities as online payments, adopting those that improve customer service while saving the city time and money.
- Locate and develop a site for Public Works Department, which will have to relocate when City Hall property goes on the market.
- Develop and plan funding to utilize full capacity of the sewer plant
- Develop relationships with other engineering firms to assure competitive environment.

## Pedestrian Friendly Crosswalks Coming

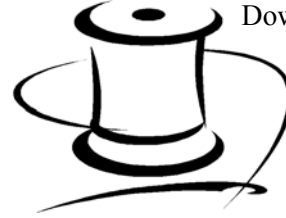
The city has identified three locations for state of the art, raised crosswalks that will serve two masters: safety and aesthetics. New crosswalks will be installed across West Main Street at Church Street in front of El Jimador; across South Chestatee Street between the Baptist Student Center and The Flower Mart; and across East Main Street at Meaders Street, in front of Parks Clothing. These aren't just any old crosswalks, either. They will be constructed using a unique decorative, heat-activated asphalt surfacing system that is attractive, durable and low maintenance. They will be 6 feet wide and rise 6 inches above road grade, with sloping sides. Total cost is about \$15,000, two-thirds of which will be paid for with Local Assistance Grant funds the city received from the state last year. The city hopes to accomplish several goals by installing the raised crosswalks: to better identify safe crossing locations, to slow vehicle traffic down, to discourage large truck traffic and generally enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment. Crews will be out taking measurements for the crosswalks soon, with installation following shortly thereafter.



## Back to the Ballot

Citizens of Dahlonega will be asked to go to the polls on Tuesday, March 17 to cast their votes for a new city council member. The special election is being held to fill the unexpired term of Post 2, which will expire at the end of 2009. Guy LaBoa recently resigned from that post. The election will be held at the Lumpkin County Parks and Recreation Community Center at 126 Riley Road, adjacent to City Hall. Candidates are Johnny Ariemma, George Klegg and Jeffrey Kridel.

## Sewing Up 2008



Downtown Dahlonega has not been immune to the economic downturn, but reports submitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs

indicate the city held its own last year, even gaining a little ground in some areas. The reports are based on business licenses and construction permits, county real estate transaction records and diligent observation. There were 16 downtown construction projects last year, twice as many as in 2006 and just one shy of last year's 17 projects. The total downtown construction investment was \$27.4 million, largely due to construction of the North Georgia College & State University parking deck. Eleven new businesses located in Dahlonega, down about a third from each of the previous two years, while 13 businesses called it quits—that number up significantly from 2006 and 2007. There were 38 new jobs created downtown and 28 lost for a net increase of 10 jobs in 2008.



**Tree City USA—Again**  
Dahlonega has been named a Tree City USA community by the Arbor Day Foundation—again. This is the eighth year Dahlonega has received this national recognition

honoring the city's commitment to community forestry. "Dahlonega's leadership recognizes trees are a vital component of our infrastructure and appreciates their environmental and economical benefits," says Rebecca Shirley, city intern from North Georgia College & State University, who worked on the application for recertification. The city celebrated its recertification as a Tree City USA community by planting several donated trees at the north end of the Yahoola Creek Reservoir near the boat ramp on Arbor Day, February 20. Speaking of trees, The certified arborist who's contracted to supervise routine maintenance of trees in Dahlonega's public rights of way has started his work. If you see trees being cut in the rights of way, rest assured it's part of the plan to protect and preserve Dahlonega's beautiful tree canopy.

# City of Dahlonega . . . continued from reverse side

## DDA Hits the Ground Running

Guided by a roll-up-their-sleeves-and-get-dirty board of directors and kept on track by executive director Joel Cordle, the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority (DDA) hit the ground running in 2009. The DDA will use the master plan it rolled out to the community last year for a road map to achieve its economic development, design and organizational goals.

Big picture goals:

- build climate for investment, profitability, sustainability
- guide and seek best balance of businesses, residential, institutional facilities
- create permanent, stable customer base for downtown businesses
- create and sustain pedestrian friendly downtown
- preserve architecture
- encourage good design and
- implement master plan.

On the to-do list for this year:

- work with Georgia Department of Transportation on potential improvements to the Morrison Moore Parkway
- extend the bronze history plaque program and promote walking tours
- finish details at Hancock Park (erect maibaum tree, install swings, benches and brick pavers)
- talk with property owners about development/redevelopment of strategic sites identified in the master plan
- study feasibility and criteria of a new conference center
- develop a downtown arts strategy and
- encourage promotion of new historic districts, such as Park Street.

## Waterworks Update

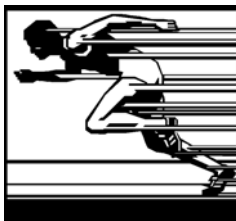


Nine months into construction of the Yahoola Creek Water Treatment

Plant, the project remains within budget and on schedule for completion a year from now. The Morrison Moore Parkway site has been teeming with workers, from two piping crews to a concrete construction crew to electrical and plumbing subcontractors who have been installing conduit runs. Concrete poured this and next month for the filter building will be covered by warm blankets if needed to protect it from the cold. Next, the finished water ground storage tank will be completed, as will all the piping at the site and the storm drainage. Steel framing should rise from the concrete slab in April.

## Plant Plenty--Eat and Sell

It's time to plant those warm season vegetable seeds. So why not plant extra to sell at the Downtown Dahlonega Farmers Market this year? Sponsored by the City of Dahlonega's Better Hometown Program and the Downtown Development Authority, the market will open in late spring, bringing local farmers and quality-minded shoppers together at Hancock Park Tuesdays and Saturdays from 7am until daily inventories sell out. Along with home grown fruits and vegetables, you can sell homemade jams, jellies, honey, dried flowers and garden seeds. You do need a permit to sell your produce at the Farmers Market. Permits cost only \$10 per month and are, available at Dahlonega City Hall. Stop by or call 706-864-6133 for details.



## Parking? Hit the Deck!

Whether you're a local resident headed downtown for some fun or a downtown business concerned about customer convenience, don't forget about the hundreds of parking spaces available nights and weekends just steps from all the downtown Dahlonega action. While it's reserved for students during weekday business hours, the North Georgia College & State University parking deck is open to the public evenings and weekends for a reasonable flat fee of \$5. The main entrance to the parking deck is on South Chestatee Street, just north of the campus's main entrance, across from the Baptist Student Center and alongside

The Flower Mart. It may also be accessed behind El Jimador restaurant

from College Circle and behind the Smith House. Businesses: Be sure to start promoting the parking deck on your websites and printed literature now.

Those storefront parking spaces available this month won't be so easy to find once spring arrives.



## City Celebration To Bring Clean Up

Georgia will celebrate its cities during Georgia Cities Week April 19-25, sponsored by the Georgia Municipal Association. Dahlonega will join in with a slate of activities designed to raise awareness of the services and functions provided by city government. Bringing back an activity that was tremendously successful last year, the city will observe the Great American Clean Up during the same week. Ideas for activities involving schools, civic organizations or other groups? Call Rebecca Shirley at 706-864-6133.



## How May We Be of Service?



Question? Comment? Problem? Call City Hall at (706) 864-6133. We'll put you in touch with the right person.

### City Council

Gary McCullough, Mayor  
Michael Clemons  
Gerald Lord  
Sam Norton  
Terry Peters  
Ralph Prescott

Bill Lewis, City Manager

## Please join us at our meetings!

Learn about your government by attending public meetings like these. Find the complete schedule at [www.cityofdahlonega.com](http://www.cityofdahlonega.com).

**City Council:** 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

**Planning/Zoning Commission:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7pm—City Hall

**Historic Preservation Commission:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

**Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 8:30am--City Hall

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